

November 13, 2011

SHOWING THE LORD'S DEATH

Joshua 5: 10 - 12

The Cross of the Lord, Jesus Christ, is the FOCAL POINT of everything, (everything in time and everything in eternity). **Even** before time, God was looking to the Cross and what Christ would accomplish there by His obedience unto death.

When God chose a people, He chose them ðin Christö based on what Christ would do FOR them at the Cross. **When** He Justified them, He was seeing the Righteousness Christ would bring at the Cross. **And**, even in eternity (future), what will be the song of the redeemed? **So**, the Cross was not only the FOCAL POINT in the beginning. **It** ALWAYS will be.

As you can see, we are planning to observe the Lordø Supper today following the message. **The** message is about Israel ðkeeping the Passoverö. **Both** are occasions for the people of God in their respective generations to ðshow the Lordø deathö.

The Passover ðshowed the Lordø deathö in picture and type until Christ came and went to the Cross and fulfilled all righteousness. **It looked** forward to the Cross and Christø first coming.

The Lordø Supper is an occasion for believers to remember what Christ accomplished when He came. **It looks** back to the Cross and forward to Christø second coming.

I took my title from Paulø first letter to the Corinthians. **Look** at I Corinthians 11:26 **“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.”**

As I said, our lesson is from Joshua. **It is** about Israel ðkeeping the Passoverö.

Look at Joshua 5:10 **“And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho.”**

The children of Israel ðkept the Passoverö because: **They** were the only ones who (rightly) could. **There** were Amorites in the land of Canaan. **But**, they were not ðkeeping the Passoverö. **There** were Hittites, Girgashites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites in the land. **But**, none of them was ðkeeping the Passoverö.

The Israelites were the only ones who ðkept the Passoverö. **They** were the only ones who had anything to observe. **They** were the only ones who had anything to celebrate. **They** are the only ones who could be reminded what God had done FOR them.

ANYONE can kill a lamb, and roast it, and eat it. **But**, only Israel could ðkeep the Passoverö. **Only** Israel could remember that God had DELIVERED them. **Only** Israel could remember that God had DELIVERED them from Judgment, from Egypt, from the wilderness, from unbelief.

Those are the four things we will look at in our study today and understand how they apply to believers in every generation.

First, Israel ōkept the Passoverö because Israel was the only nation that God had delivered from Judgment. **Israel** was the only nation God had ōpassed overö in Judgment. **God** judged Egypt. **Israel** was in Egypt. **But**, God delivered Israel from His judgment. **I am** speaking here of the last of ten plagues God inflicted upon Egypt. **He** smote their ōfirstbornö.

Look at Exodus 11: 4-6 “**And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt:**

5 And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts.

6 And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it anymore.”

God’s threat here is not against ALL Egypt. **It is** against the ōfirstbornö. **Every** household would be affected. **But**, only the ōfirstbornö were under the threat of death. Only the ōfirstbornö were under the threat of God’s Judgment. **God** smote the ōfirstbornö of Egypt. **But**, He spared (ōpassed overö) the ōfirstbornö of Israel.

I believe this TYPIFIES God ōpassing overö His elect in eternity. **The** elect are God’s ōfirstbornö. **They** are so designated because they are in Christ.

They are the ōfirstbornö because they were “**chosen in Him before the foundation of the world**” (Eph 1: 4). **And**, Christ is the “**firstborn among many brethren**” (Rom 8:29). **God** ōpassed overö them in eternity when He put them, elected them, chose them in Christ. **There** is a multitude out of every kindred, tribe, and tongue whom God has not appointed unto wrath, but salvation.

Look at I Thessalonians 5: 9-10 “**For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,**

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.”

SOME were ōnot appointed to wrathö? **SOME** were appointed to ōobtain salvationö?

This is the thought God continues in Exodus. Look at Exodus 11:7 “**But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.**”

There is a **DISTINCTION** among the inhabitants of the earth. **And**, this **DISTINCTION** is not the work of men. **It is** the work of God. **And**, it is the work of God from all eternity based on the work Christ would **AND DID** finish at the Cross.

God ōpassed overö (in Judgment), (i.e. He did not judge the sins of His elect), until Christ, their appointed Surety and Substitute, came in time and put those sins away on Calvary.

Paul wrote of this in his letter to the Romans. **Look** at Romans 3: 24-25 “**Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:**

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.”

God ðset Christ forth a propitiationö (a penalty bearing/justice satisfying sacrifice). **And**, in so doing, He declared His Justice in ðpassing overö the sins of all His elect prior to the coming of Christ. **The** sins of ALL the elect were judged in Christ on the Cross.

God’s elect were just as deserving of (eternal) punishment for sin as anyone else in the world. **Yet**, God ðpassed overö them UNTIL Christ came in time and suffered the punishment they deserved. **Christ’s** coming in time and bearing away the sins of His sheep vindicated God’s Justice in ðpassing overö those sins until that time.

Notice one more thing here. **God** ðpassed overö Israel while they were still in BONDAGE, (i.e. Legal BONDAGE). **A debt** of punishment for sin was STILL owed. **And**, yet, God did not demand payment from His people. Why not? **Because** He was looking at ðthe bloodö. ð**When** I see the blood, I will pass over you.ö

What blood? **For** National Israel it was the blood of the Passover Lamb on their doorposts and lintels. **For** Spiritual Israel it is the blood of Christ (the true Passover) which was shed at Calvary. **When** did God see the blood by which He ðpassed overö His elect? **He** saw it in eternity. **He** saw it in Christ, “**the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world**”.

The nation Israel ðkept the Passoverö because they were the only nation God had ðpassed overö in Judgment. **Believers** in every generation (since the Cross) observe the Lord’s Supper for the very same reason.

Second, Israel ðkept the Passoverö because they were the only nation God had delivered from BONDAGE. **Having** ðpassed overö them in Judgment, He delivered them from BONDAGE.

The Israelites were slaves to the Egyptians. **The** tenth plague was the one that (finally) caused Pharaoh to let Israel go (to release them from BONDAGE).

Look at Exodus 12:29 “**And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle.”**

God executed His threat. **He did** (exactly) what Moses told Pharaoh He would do. **And**, Pharaoh (finally) let Israel go.

Look at Exodus 12: 30-32 “**And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead.**

31 And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, *and* get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as ye have said.

32 Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also.”

Israel’s release from this (physical) BONDAGE is a picture of Spiritual Israel’s release from (legal) BONDAGE. **All in Adam** owe a debt to God’s law and justice. **This** is a two-fold debt. **First**, all owe a (legal) debt of obedience to the law.

Look at Galatians 3: 10-11 **“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.**

11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is evident*: for, The just shall live by faith.”

And, because none in Adam have KEPT the law (i.e. obeyed it perfectly and continually), there is another part of that debt. **All** owe a (legal) debt of punishment to God’s justice.

Look at Romans 6:23 **“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”**

Christ delivered His people from this two-fold debt to law and justice. He delivered them from (legal) BONDAGE by His obedience unto death.

Many times in the scriptures God’s elect are referred to as “sheep”. **Christ** said, “I lay down my life for the SHEEP.” The SHEEP are the ones God “passed over” in Judgment in eternity. **The** SHEEP are the ones Christ delivered from (legal) BONDAGE. **The** SHEEP are the ones whose debt to God’s law and justice was paid (in full) by the obedience unto death of their Lord, Jesus Christ.

Look at John 10:27-30 **“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:**

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.

29 My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.

30 I and *my* Father are one.”

Israel “kept the Passover” because they were the only ones God had delivered from (physical) BONDAGE.

Believers in every generation celebrate the Lord’s Supper because they are persuaded that Christ’s obedience unto death ALONE paid the two-fold debt of every sinner He died for. **Christ** fulfilled all that the law required in the way of obedience and satisfied all that Justice required in the way of punishment. **He** delivered His SHEEP from (legal) BONDAGE.

Third, (THIS generation) of Israel ðkept the Passoverö because they were the only ones that God had SUSTAINED through the wilderness.

Look at Joshua 5:11 “**And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched *corn* in the selfsame day.**”

This is NOT corn that Israel planted or toiled over. **It is**, rather, corn which God provided them in the land He had promised.

And, this ðold corn of the landö might well TYPIFY that which God has provided for His elect from all eternity. **When** they entered the Promised Land, Israel ate of the ðold corn of the landö. **But**, what sustained them BEFORE then? **What** sustained them throughout their 40 years of wandering? **One** thing, Manna!

Look at Joshua 5:12 “**And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.**”

Manna was the food God had prepared especially for the children of Israel during their wandering in the wilderness 40 ears. **It was** a SPECIAL provision for that SPECIAL time. **It was** what kept (what SUSTAINED) them during that time.

There was no corn in the ðwildernessö. **There** were no fields in the ðwildernessö. **There** were no crops grown, no planting, no harvest in the ðwildernessö. **The** ðwildernessö was only desert and desolation. **But**, God provided His chosen nation bread. **He** gave them ðmannaö, a TYPE of Christ, the ðtrue bread of heavenö.

Only Israel could remember that God had SUSTAINED them through the wilderness. **Moses** reminded them of that fact.

Look at Deut 29:5 “**And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot.**”

Were these things due to ðluckö or ðcoincidenceö or ðchanceö? **Or**, were they due to Godð good providence? **They** were due to Godð SUSTAINING Goodness.

Israel’s ðwildernessö experience is TYPICAL of the rebellion, false religion and idolatry that all of Godð elect are partakers of by nature. **Paul** described this time (this ðwildernessö experience) in his letter to the Ephesians.

Look at Ephesians 2: 1-2 “**And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins;**

2 **Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:”**

Lest you think that NOT all, (all without exception), are being spoken of here, Paul includes himself also.

Look at Ephesians 2:3 “**Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.**”

The ðmannaö ceased when Israel got into the Promised Land. **But**, until it did, it was the ONLY thing SUSTAINING them thru that öwildernessö. **This** is a PICTURE of Christ being the ONLY one SUSTAINING His sheep during their rebellion, false religion and idolatry.

If Ephesians 2 is speaking of every one of Godø elect BEFORE regeneration, (and it is), who can (rightly) claim to have contributed ANYTHING to their deliverance from their öwildernessö experience?

National Israel was SUSTAINED thru the öwildernessö because of Godø GOODNESS (alone). **And**, Spiritual Israel is SUSTAINED thru the öwildernessö by Godø mercy and grace ALONE.

Israel ökept the Passoverö because they were the only ones God had SUSTAINED through the wilderness. **Believers** in every generation partake of the Lordø Supper because they have been shown that Godø mercy and grace ALONE sustained them thru their rebellion, their false religion, their idolatry.

The fourth (and last) reason Israel ökept the Passoverö was because they were the only ones that God delivered from the wilderness. **They** were the only ones God brought into the Promised Land. **They** were the only ones God delivered from UNBELIEF.

Israel was öencamped in Gilgalö. **That’s** inside Canaan. **God** had not only sustained this generation of Israel through the wilderness. **He had** also brought them (DELIVERED them) into the land of rest.

Thankfully, Israelø öwildernessö experience is not the end of the story. Although over 600,000 fighting men died there, God still delivered His people to the Land of Promise.

Look at Hebrews 3: 16-18 “**For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.**

17 **But with whom was he grieved forty years? *was it* not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?**

18 **And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?”**

The fathers of this generation of Israel are STARK examples of those who would not believe God. **They** REFUSED to believe that God had given them this land. **They** REFUSED to enter in and possess it by Godø command. **And**, they died under the Judgment of God. **They** died in their UNBELIEF. **Their** öcarcasses fellö in the wilderness.

But, look back at verse 16, that little phrase I underlined, “**howbeit not all**”. **Although** God did not deliver their fathers from the wilderness, although He did not deliver them from UNBELIEF, (yet) He did deliver those of this generation.

HE changed their thinking. **He** commanded them to follow Joshua. **And**, they submitted. **He** commanded their entrance into this land. **And**, they submitted. **He** commanded their circumcision. **And**, they submitted. **He** commanded that they ōkeep the Passoverö. **And**, they submitted.

Believers (in whatever generation) will be characterized by their submission to Godø will, to Godø word. **Believers** (in whatever generation) believe on Him ōwhom God has sentö. **Believers** (in whatever generation) will rest their **WHOLE** salvation in Christ and Christ **ALONE** and repent of ever resting elsewhere.

Though all of Godø elect start out their religious lives in the ōwildernessö (rebellion, false religion, idolatry), **NONE** of them are left there. **All** are delivered. **And**, they are delivered **NOT** because they ōget betterö. **They** are delivered because of Godø abundant mercy and grace in Christ.

Just like God did not leave His chosen nation in the wilderness because of the UNBELIEF of **SOME**. **Neither** does He leave His chosen people in the ōwildernessö of false religion and idolatry. **In time** He makes each of them to see what we are in Christ by virtue of His work on the Cross.

Look at Ephesians 2: 4-7 “**But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.**”

In time God brings **SOME**, (all those of His choosing), to understand that we have **EVERYTHING** based on Christø obedience unto death **ALONE**.

The Passover was a celebration of Godø **DELIVERANCE**. **They** ōkept the Passoverö whom God had **DELIVERED**. **In Egypt** God delivered His ōchosenö (the firstborn) from the Judgment of death. **In Canaan** He delivered His ōchosenö from the Judgment of UNBELIEF. **They** had been delivered from (legal) bondage. They had been delivered from the wilderness. **They** had been delivered from their UNBELIEF.

Is it not, also, true that Spiritual Israel **ALONE** has anything to celebrate, (and **THAT** because of their **DELIVERANCE**)?

Though the ōchosenö of God all fell in Adam, God had already ōpassed overö them in Judgment, looking to the Cross (the blood) of Christ. **Although** Godø elect owed a debt to Godø law and

justice, God sent Christ, their Surety, in time to pay that debt in full. **Although** the elect are all born in rebellion, begin in false religion, and are by nature idolaters, yet, Christ SUSTAINS them thru their ðwildernessö experience. **And**, although Christø SHEEP start out in UNBELIEF, Christ seeks us out, finds us, and brings us to rest in His Righteousness ALONE for all our salvation.

Israel ðkept the Passoverö because God DELIVERED them from Judgment, from BONDAGE, from the wilderness, from UNBELIEF. **Spiritual** Israel celebrates the Lordø Supper from the very same reasons.

If this is your testimony, Godø commands and I invite you to join us in celebrating the Lordø Supper. Join us in ðshowing the Lordø death till He comeö.

By Mark Pannell